

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

SCI-06 OMB-01 GAC-01 ACDA-19 RSR-01 /112 W
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P 032000 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1899

NASA WASHDC INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PRIORITY

NASA GSFN GREENBELT MD PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 3078

NASA GREENBELT FOR CODES 852 AND 802

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCLR, AR

SUBJECT: SECURITY OF USNS VANGUARD

1. BUENOS AIRES PRESS HAS REPORTED DECLARATION OF " REVOLUTIONARY PERONISM" GROUP WHICH, AMONG OTHER " ANTI- IMPERIALIST" REMARKS, CONTAINED STATEMENT DESCRIBING " INSTALLATION OF VANGUARD IN ARGENTINE TERRITORIAL WATERS" AS " ONE OF THE MOST DISGRACEFUL VIOLATIONS OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY." NAVAL BASE SECURITY OFFICERS IN MAR DEL PLATA HAVE ALSO INFORMED SHIP OFFICIALS OF RUMORS OF EXTREMIST THREATS AGAINST VANGUARD AND ACCUSATIONS THAT SHIP IS INVOLVED IN CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES.

2. EMBASSY HAS LONG RECOGNIZED VANGUARD' S POTENTIAL FOR ATTRACT- ING ULTRA- NATIONALIST AND ANTI- AMERICAN ATTENTION, AND INTENSIVE PROGRAMS OF PRESS AND PUBLIC ACCESS CONDUCTED DURING BUENOS AIRES PORT VISIT, FOLLOWED BY SIMILAR PROGRAM ON ARRIVAL IN MAR DEL PLATA, WERE SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO MINIMIZE THIS POTENTIAL BY ENSURING PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE AND ACCEPTANCE OF VANGUARD MISSION. IN ADDITION, DCM SPECIFICALLY ADVISED RESPONSIBLE PERONIST CONTACT OF VANGUARD PROGRAM PRIOR TO SHIP' S ARRIVAL IN ORDER TO ENSURE UNDER- STANDING IN PERONIST SECTOR. CONTACT REACTION WAS AFFIRMATIVE, AND CONFIDENTIAL

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HE UNDERTOOK TO PASS ON INVITATIONS TO VISIT SHIP TO APPROPRIATE PERONIST PERSONALITIES.

3. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THERE IS BROAD PUBLIC INTEREST AND ACCEPTANCE OF VANGUARD MISSION AND THAT OPPOSITION IS CONFINED TO PREDICTABLE AND EXTREMELY SMALL MINORITY WHICH NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF PERONIST PARTY AND INCOMING GOVERNMENT, MUCH LESS POPULACE

AS WHOLE. MOREOVER, ARGENTINE NAVY IS APPLYING STRICT SECURITY CONTROL MEASURES FOR ACCESS TO SHIP. EMBASSY'S JUDGEMENT IS THAT SHIP AND ITS MISSION ARE NOT IN JEOPARDY, AND THAT RISK TO PERSONNEL WHILE ON SHORE IS REMOTE. NEVERTHELESS, EMBASSY IS IMMEDIATELY DISPATCHING TEAM INCLUDING SECURITY, NAVAL AND PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICERS, AND SCIENTIFIC COUNSELOR FOR FIRST-HAND REVIEW OF SITUATION AT MAR DEL PLATA AND EVALUATION OF SECURITY BRIEFING OF SHIP PERSONNEL. RESULTS OF EVALUATION AND ANY RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE REPORTED PROMPTLY.

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